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25 November 1969

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Participation in ACDA General Advisory
Committee Meeting on China, 25 November 1969

1. ACDA General Advisory Committee (GAC)* had its first outing on China today, with outside consultants Professor Allen S. Whiting, University of Michigan; Professor A. Doak Barnett of the Brookings Institute; and myself, representing CIA. My participation had been worked out between ACDA and the DDI.
2. Per pre-arranged scheduling with Mr. McCloy and Mr. Thomas W. Fina of the ACDA GAC staff, I led off with the GAC (only) with an all-source 30-minute discussion of Chinese advanced weapons highlights. My second half hour was an open one, with Messrs. Whiting, Barnett, and Fina sitting in. Here I started the discussion with a brief set of (personal) propositions concerning China's nuclear motives. Discussion was lively and went well.
3. Allen Whiting, next at bat, sketched certain of the debates on strategic questions which have taken place within China during recent years, and suggested that:

* Chairman John J. McCloy; Messrs. I. W. Abel, William J. Casey, C. Douglas Dillon, William C. Foster, Kermit Gordon, James R. Killian, Lauris Norstad, Peter G. Peterson, Dean Rusk, William Scranton, John A. Wheeler. Also present, Messrs. Marshall Green, Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian Pacific Affairs, and Mr. Howard A. Furnas, Special Assistant to Director, ACDA. Absent: GAC members Harold Brown, Jack Ruina, and Cyrus Vance.

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a. We should recognize that the Chinese will be extremely suspicious of any US post-Mao initiatives, especially any made during the probable Chinese succession crisis.

b. We should therefore seek to avoid building an image of US-Soviet collusion.

c. Also, the earlier US initiatives are taken, the better (that is, before Mao's death), and the less likely that the more militant voices within China will prevail in a post-Mao situation.

d. There are plenty of better ways and means of talking quietly to the Chinese other than in Warsaw.

e. We should take a more relaxed position concerning Chinese Communist participation in Specialized Agency and other international conferences.

4. Doak Barnett stressed China's political motives re nuclear status. He judged that the Chinese have already entered a period of change and uncertainty concerning both the US and the USSR, and that therefore they may come to take a less starchy position concerning arms limitations pacts if they feel that adherence to them might help to narrow the nuclear gap between China and the USSR/USA. Barnett stated that one way for the US and the USSR to approach the question of China and arms control would be the route of total damage-limiting actions. This would mean ABMs, etc. He added that a better approach would be for the US and the USSR to assume that China will begin to move toward a responsible counter deterrent policy, realizing the enormous gap between its nuclear capability and that of the USSR/USA. What China will be after, according to Barnett, will be a minimal second strike nuclear deterrent, with no thought whatsoever of a possible first strike capability.

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The US should accordingly stay away from ABMs, which the Chinese will continue to estimate are principally anti-Chinese weapons. Even if the Sovs should put up a few more ABMs, said Barnett, the US should not respond in kind but should seek to offset them in some other way: e.g., more US nuclear submarines.

5. Subsequent discussion centered on the questions of Chinese suspicion of US-Soviet collusion, the degree to which the US might be fairly free in its negotiations with the USSR because of the enormous gap in Chinese nuclear prospects, (my point) the possibility that Chinese are now in a period of fundamental internal debate as to whether the US or the USSR should be considered China's number one enemy, and the (admittedly specious) China justification for a US ABM.

6. The only GAC conclusion on collusion concerned us three consultants, the GAC wiggling us because although we came at the Chinese question from different vantage points, our judgments were virtually identical concerning China's motives, the high political content thereof, China's generally prudent foreign behavior, and the ways in which Chinese strategic questions are markedly different from those of the Soviets. I think we collectively made a constructive contribution -- and a dent on Committee members used to dealing primarily with US-Soviet strategic context.

7. A stenotypist was present at the wish of Chairman McCloy, for all but my initial all-source discussion. Even so, Mr. Rusk and I asked him to stop note-taking on a couple of occasions during the later, general discussion.

8. Chairman McCloy broke us off at 12:15 for lunch. We were divided into four small table groups: my companions, Kermit Gordon, James Killian, Lauris Norstad, and I. W. Abel.

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9. All-in-all, I thought the exercise a lively and worthwhile one, and I heard various expressions of such sentiment from various of the GAC members. They are a most impressive group, and I am pleased to see them beginning to bring China more into the equation.

10. I am indebted to various officers in OSR, ISA, and OSI for helping me get set for this seance.



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